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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A powder compacting method for performing a punch driving step ~~wherein~~comprising:

~~after~~-filling material powder in a cavity; and

pressure molding the material powder filled in the cavity ~~is pressure-molded~~ by using an upper punch and a lower punch,

said punch driving step comprising a primary driving step of driving either one of the punches until the thickness of the cavity formed between the upper and lower punches becomes slightly greater than a target molding thickness, and a secondary driving step of measuring a gap between the upper and lower punches and driving either one of the punches while controlling it until the measured value reaches the target molding thickness.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A powder compacting method for performing a punch driving step ~~wherein~~comprising:

~~after~~-filling material powder in a cavity; and

pressure molding the material powder filled in the cavity ~~is pressure-molded~~ by using an upper punch and a lower punch,

said punch driving step comprising a primary driving step of driving either one of the punches so that the upper and lower punches become closer to each other, and a secondary driving step of, when the gap between said upper and lower punches is greater than the target molding thickness due to said primary driving step, driving either one of the punches while controlling the gap between the upper and lower punches until it reaches the target molding thickness.



Claim 8 (original): A powder compacting device for pressure molding of material powder, filled in a cavity, between an upper punch and a lower punch, comprising:

a primary drive device for driving one of said upper and lower punches upwards and downwards;

a secondary drive device for minutely adjusting the top to bottom position of one of said upper and lower punches;

a measuring unit for determining the gap between the upper and lower punches; and

a control section for feeding back a measurement result of the measuring unit, and controlling said secondary drive device so that the measurement result reaches a target value.

Claim 9 (original): The powder compacting device according to Claim 8, wherein one of said upper and lower punches is driven by said primary drive device and said secondary drive device.

Claim 10 (original): The powder compacting device according to Claim 8, wherein one of said upper and lower punches is driven by said primary drive device and the other is driven by said secondary drive device.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The powder compacting device according to ~~one of Claims 8 to 10~~claim 8, wherein said upper punch is driven by said secondary drive device.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The powder compacting device according to ~~one of Claims 8 to 10~~claim 8, wherein said lower punch is driven by said secondary drive device.